groups of children including girls and children of weaker sections. Measures are also being undertaken to strengthen the accountability of the schools system towards parents and the community. The Mid-Day Meal Scheme that provides a cooked meal to all children of primary schools and alternative education centres has also helped in checking dropout rates.

Dropout of students

†419. DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI:
SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD:

Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that 31 per cent of students upto V standard, 50 per cent of students upto VIII standard and 63 per cent of students upto X standard leave their studies incomplete in the schools;

(b) if so, the details in this regard; and

(c) the number of students who leave their studies even before completing their XII standard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI D. PURANDESWARI): (a) and (b) In 2003-04, at the national level, the dropout rate is 31.5% at the primary stage (Classes I—V), 52.3% at the elementary stage (Classes I—VIII) and 62.7% at the secondary stage (Classes I—X).

(c) According to the available estimates, 20.4% of the students entering school in class I were enrolled in Class XII in 2003-04. This figure does not include the number of students opting for various technical, vocational and distance education courses after class VIII.

Percentage of school students admitted in higher education

†420. SHRI RAM JETHMALANI:
SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD:

Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.